?:Ruiz Camacho J-3 (no date) 1960 SF24 Utu SF24
Chipaya

teenth century. To reach them today, you travel by train from La Paz to the city of Oruro, then by car or bus to Curaguara de Carangas. From there you must walk over a desert worthy of Siberia to the left bank of the Lauca River, where a canoe must be found for the crossing, before you go on to the village.

Little is known of Chipaya history. It has been conjectured that they may be the descendants of one of the first groups to reach the American continent. They call themselves the descendants of the *chullpas*, the ancient inhabitants of the area who, according to legend, hid themselves in reed baskets when the sun appeared for the first time.

The *chullpas* are still in the neighborhood, silent mummies resting in the square sod houses they built long ago. The word *chullpa* is also used for the burial houses. The ghost villages of *chullpas*, their doorways invariably facing east, can be seen by travelers today. Modern Indians avoid them with superstitious dread. It is claimed that the Chipayas are feared by the stronger Aymaras be-

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cause of their origins; the conviction they themselves hold of their own superiority leads them to treat the Aymara haughtily and proudly. Nevertheless, commercial exchange is carried on between the two groups, and all Chipayas speak Aymara as a second language, although they speak Uru among themselves.

Only a prodigy of work and skill has enabled the Chipayas to survive in this bleak land—"the barren and desolate plain on which we live," as one man bitterly described it. Lacking trees and even soil suitable for making sundried brick, they build their houses of sods hacked from the plain, piling them in a circular beehive shape, sometimes all the way to the peak, sometimes making a thatched roof of arched bundles of a shrub called tola. The doorways face east. Usually the only article of furniture is a wooden table, used only for household ceremonies. Very heavy woolen blankets serve as beds, as they did in pre-Columbian days throughout the Andes. Today a few families sleep on low earth benches of the kind other Andean Indians have long made in imitation of Spanish beds.

The Chipayas are shepherds, raising llamas, sheep, and pigs. Like many others who tend flocks, they dislike to kill their animals for food, and subsist mainly on potatoes

Chipayas blowing their flutes on festival day

and quinoa, supplemented by the wild tubers they gather, an occasional vicuña, and sheep's-milk cheese, which is also their chief commercial product. In characteristic Andean fashion, the potatoes are allowed to freeze and dry and are then ground into chuño flour.

Land ownership in the village continues in the pattern of what has been called Inca communism. The people are divided into two rival hereditary groups or moieties, and the members of each group have joint ownership of their pastures. The cultivated lands are divided into stripe of thirty by nine hundred feet that are reassigned each year

5: Polo de Ondegardo--175 O-5 (ca. 1545) 1916 SE13 Inca SE13
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themselves out for no more interest than half a peso per month. If they were all ordered to pay as tribute one piece of cloth, they would not comply, but they weave more than 2,000 to earn 500 pesos, while dying of hunger and being maltreated by those people. Truly this is the way it is, that they do not consider them to be men, nor do they themselves consider themselves as such.

The other subdivisions /parcialidades/ considered the distribution of the livestock and of the little mines in Soroche, and they even said to one another that they had to pay more, because they were more capable in the kind of business which yielded silver, and they dealt with the quality of the lands, and it was thus from the first time that I saw them apportion the tax until the last. I learned that they dealt with these things quite minutely, with the result that I also learned that, among themselves, the ability to pay on the part of the subdivisions /parcialidades/ is well known, from the time when they are formed, and when there is anything new they know about it, with the result that in this general division they then come to an accord with little noise, and the thing is done, and there is no doubt but that none of the principales of any subdivision /parcialidad/ recognizes any other or is subject to him so that he could be injured by him, except that there is the subdivision /parcialidad/ of Anansaya (133), which is usually recognized /167/

133. Anan-suyo = high region. Hanan or Hanac = high, what is above; suyo = region.

as somewhat pre-eminent in the making of accounts in their houses and in calling them together when it should be ordered. But among the subdivisions /parcialidades/ themselves there is no doubt but that they scrutinize every tomin in many places, and that none of them allows itself to be abused by any of the others. This must be understood, as I have said at other times, in many places, when dealing with the ability to pay, and the